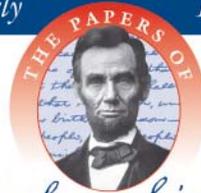


LINCOLN EDITOR

The Quarterly

Newsletter of



January - March 2016

Volume 16 Number 1

Abraham Lincoln

"a great honor and a great labor" A. Lincoln, October 26, 1863

FOUNDATION AWARDS GENEROUS GIFT

The Springfield Tracy Fund has made a gift of \$25,000 to the Papers of Abraham Lincoln. This gift will match one quarter of the National Endowment for the Humanities grant for fiscal year 2017, which begins July 1, 2016. The project very much appreciates this vote of confidence from people long familiar with our work.

Don Tracy, a local attorney and advisor to the fund, said, "I have been a long-time supporter, proponent, and admirer of what was the Lincoln Legal Papers and is now the expanded Papers of Abraham Lincoln."

Papers of Abraham Lincoln Director Daniel W. Stowell commented, "For decades, Don Tracy has supported the work of locating, assembling, and publishing the documentary record of Abraham Lincoln's life and career. As President of the Abraham Lincoln Association from 1998 to 2002, Tracy was supportive of the expansion of the Lincoln Legal Papers into a broader project to encompass Lincoln's entire life. He has been a great encouragement to me personally as director of the project since 2000, and I am delighted that he and his wife Wanda have decided to support the project in this way."

THE JOY OF SERENDIPITY

The identification of forgeries is an ongoing challenge for the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, as recent events reminded us once again. In 2008, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum acquired a document from an auction house, and we scanned it and dutifully entered it into our database. The single-page document was a brief endorsement by Abraham Lincoln, dated August 17, 1863. It concerned a promotion to brigadier general for Colonel Hiram Berdan, a well-known engineer and marksman, who recruited and led two regiments of carefully selected sharpshooters. We titled it "Endorsement of Abraham Lincoln to Unknown" and filed it according to the date in the database but did not transcribe it.

Four years later, Assistant Editor David Gerleman, one of the project's researchers at the National Archives, located an "OFFICIAL BUSINESS" envelope addressed to "His Excellency, The President of the U. States" with the same endorsement on it in Lincoln's hand. However, because it was an endorsement on an envelope sent to Lincoln, Gerleman titled it, "Envelope of Unknown to Abraham Lincoln," and gave it a more

general date of August 1863, as it is our practice to title and date each document according to the original document, not the endorsement. For nearly four years, the two documents coexisted in our database, but we did not know they were the same.

This year, as for several years past, the Center for State Policy and Leadership at the University of Illinois Springfield, a cosponsor of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, wanted to feature a Lincoln document on the back cover of its annual report. When asked to provide an appropriate document, Associate Editor Stacy Pratt McDermott selected the document discovered at the National Archives. As she conducted research on the document, she located the separate document from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and realized that the texts were the same.

An Internet search revealed that in 2002, the Rail Splitter auction house had offered the document for sale, then withdrawn it when some questioned its

SERENDIPITY *continued on page 9...*

PROJECT AND STAFF NEWS

In late January, Assistant Editor Boyd Murphree left the project to take a position as Digital Project Manager for the Florida Family and Community History collections at the University of Florida Libraries in Gainesville. Murphree joined the Papers of Abraham Lincoln in 2012 and also became the Project Manager for the Center for Digital Initiatives at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. As assistant editor, he led efforts to develop and implement document-level subject headings and shepherded thousands of documents through various stages of the editorial process. As project manager for the Center for Digital Initiatives, he oversaw the digitization of the Richard Yates gubernatorial papers from the Civil War, Lincoln prints, Illinois and Lincoln sheet music and song sheets, and thousands of images from the Library's still image collection. Most of those collections are now available online at *Chronicling Illinois*, thanks to Murphree's efforts.

We wish him well in his new position and will miss his humor and gentle demeanor.

On January 14, Assistant Editor David Gerleman made a presentation on Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* to a public audience at the Lifelong Learning College at The Villages in Florida. Gerleman discussed how fact and fiction have become blurred in historical memory to such a degree that it impacts our view of the American Civil War and Reconstruction eras even today.

On January 29, Paul Roberts of Richmond, Virginia's PBS station (WCVE) interviewed David Gerleman (pictured below) regarding the lobbying efforts of Sara Josepha Hale, the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book* and author of "Mary had a little lamb," to convince Abraham Lincoln to proclaim a national holiday of thanks-giving. Hale believed that such a

celebration would help build a sense of national unity even in the midst of wartime. Lincoln agreed and issued proclamations in 1863 and 1864. The program also explores Berkeley Plantation's claim to have held the first English-speaking Thanksgiving.

During the quarter, Assistant Editor Christian McWhirter published several pieces, including a review of *The Rebel Yell: A Cultural History* by Craig A. Warren in the Winter 2016 issue of *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society*; a review of *The Hateful Eight* in the January-February issue of *Illinois Heritage*, a tourist guide for Springfield (with Samuel Wheeler) in the Spring issue of the *Civil War Monitor*, and an article (with Erika Holst) on the Edwards Place piano restoration in the January 7 issue of *Illinois Times*. In addition, he gave a talk on the Civil War in popular culture to the Springfield Optimists' Breakfast Club on February 19, and a talk on music in the Civil War to the Springfield branch of the Daughters of the American Revolution on February 20.

Former Graduate Assistant StaLynn Davis's thesis was nominated by the History Department for Outstanding Master's Thesis. Several members of the staff attended a reception at the University on February 8, at which Davis was honored for her thesis entitled, "The Cross, the Way to Freedom," a study of religion and enslaved African American women.

Assistant Editor Ed Bradley wrote a joint review of *Slavery, Race, and Conquest in the Tropics: Lincoln, Douglas, and the Future of Latin America* by Robert E. May and *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops* by John David Smith for the Winter 2016 issue of the *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association*.

Also in February, volunteer Gordon S. Brown (pictured below) celebrated his 80th birthday, and project



staff at the National Archives celebrated with him. Brown has volunteered since the fall of 2013 and has scanned hundreds of documents at the National Archives.

At the March 4 Texas State Historical Association Award Luncheon, Ed Bradley's book received some well-deserved praise.

According to presenter Randolph Campbell, the committee for the Kate Broocks Bates Award asked him to mention one book of “special merit.” “The committee members,” Campbell continued, “considered Edward Bradley’s book, *“We Never Retreat”*: *Filibustering Expeditions into Spanish Texas, 1812-1822*, published by Texas A&M University Press, a very close second to the winning book. The committee praised *“We Never Retreat”* for providing ‘a contextualized examination of the intersection of filibustering, the Mexican War of Independence, and United States Diplomatic Relations with Spain.’”

In March, Associate Editor Stacy McDermott (pictured below) gave two presentations about Mary



Lincoln and discussed her book *Mary Lincoln: Southern Girl, Northern Woman*. On March 11, she was the luncheon speaker at the annual meeting of the Illinois Association of Family & Consumer Sciences in Springfield, Illinois. On March 19, she was an invited speaker at the Abraham Lincoln Institute’s Annual Symposium at Ford’s Theatre in Washington, DC. Readers can view the presentation at <http://www.c-span.org/video/?406672-105/discussion-life-legacy-mary-lincoln>.

In mid-March, longtime volunteer and prodigious transcriber Joan Walters (pictured top of next column) left the project to move to Seattle, Washington. Walters

joined the Papers of Abraham Lincoln as one of its first two volunteer transcribers in early April 2012. Over the past nearly four years, she has transcribed more than 12,200 documents for the Papers of Abraham Lincoln. In addition, she has also befriended and mentored many additional volunteers and student interns. We will sorely miss Joan as she begins a new chapter of her life in Seattle, but she goes with our best wishes.

In July of last year, Paula M. Woods brought in a commission signed by Abraham Lincoln for scanning and addition to our database. The Old Lincoln Courtroom and Museum in Beardstown, Illinois, owns the commission, and we are grateful for the opportunity to scan it.

Also in July 2015, Daniel W. Stowell visited the offices of the Illinois State Medical Society in Chicago to scan a Lincoln endorsement that the society owns. The project thanks Alexander Lerner for making the document available for scanning.

In February 2016, the project obtained an image of an appointment from Joseph M. DeAntonis. We thank Mr. DeAntonis for providing the image of this document.

On Lincoln’s birthday, Andrea Ferin permitted staff at Niagara University to scan two Lincoln documents that she owns. Thank you to David Schoen, Director of Libraries at Niagara University, for assisting the project in this way and to Ms. Ferin for making the documents available for scanning.

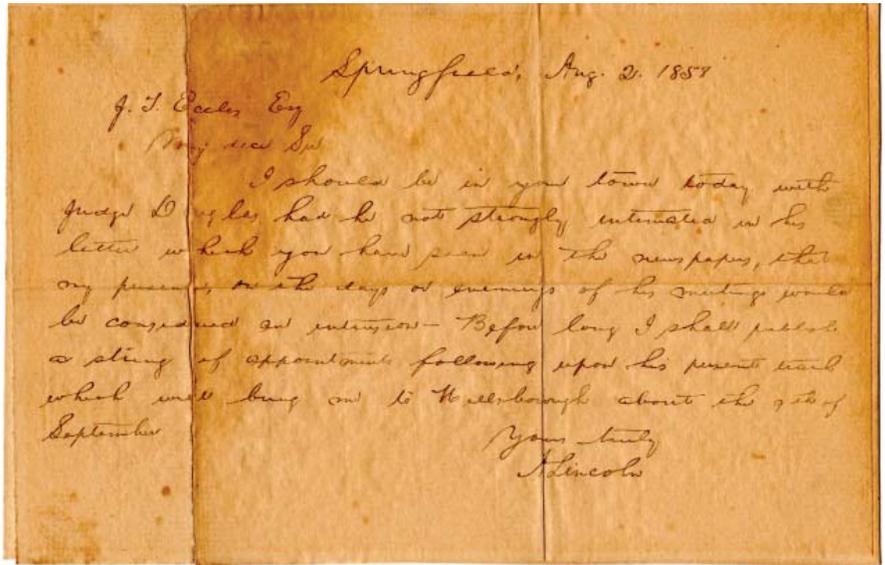
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The project appreciates the generosity of the following donors (January - March): Charles D. Bauer, Gertrude N. Bradley, Dr. Delinda A. Chapman, Adeline Gidcombe, Dale Hershey, Harold Holzer, Iron Mountain Employees, Evan Kaplan, Robert E. May, Marie A. McWhirter, Diana J. Mercer, David B. Miller, William K. Miller, Robert O’Connor, Carol C. Price, Joe Rubinfine, Suzette Starr, William P. Shannon IV, Sheri Thomas, Michael E. Unsworth, and Cathryn Wood.

A TALE OF THREE FORGERIES

At the end of February, Michelle La Voie, the director of the public library in Wellsville, New York, contacted the Papers of Abraham Lincoln about a document in their collections. Wellsville is a small community in southwestern New York, just north of the Pennsylvania border. A Lincoln collector named Clifford Coyle donated his collection to the David A. Howe Public Library in Wellsville in 1946. A centerpiece of the collection is a letter written by Abraham Lincoln to Joseph T. Eccles in August 1858.

After consulting our database, we were able to confirm that the original letter is in the collections of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, and has been in the collections of its predecessor, the Illinois State Historical Library, since November 1972. Lincoln wrote the letter just a few weeks before the beginning of the famous series of debates with Stephen A. Douglas to represent Illinois in the U.S. Senate. The first debate was in Ottawa on August 21, the second in Freeport on



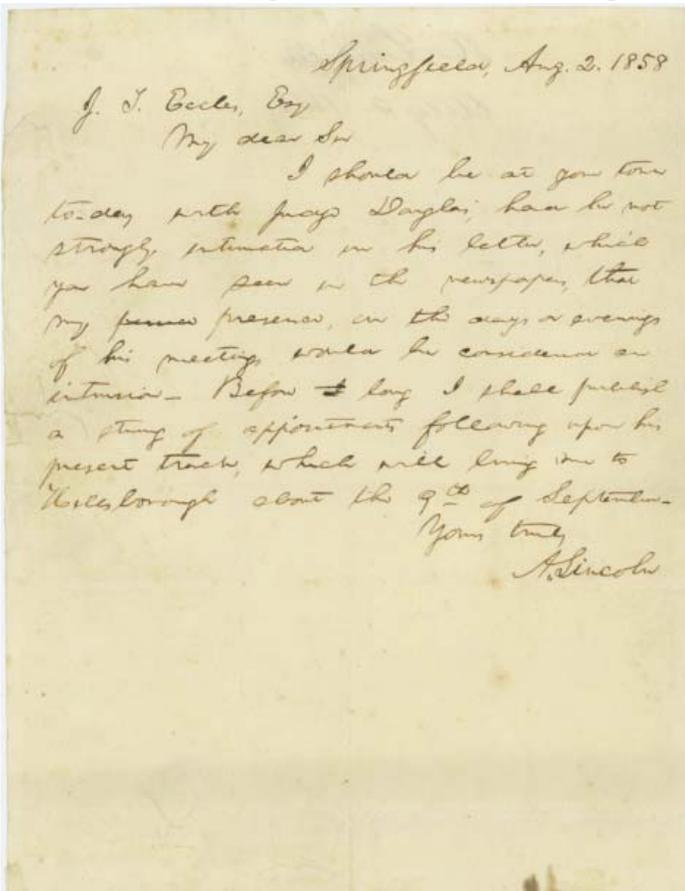
Abraham Lincoln to Joseph T. Eccles, 2 August 1858, Forgery A.
Image courtesy of the David A. Howe Public Library, Wellsville, NY.

August 27, and the third in Jonesboro on September 15. Between the second and third debates, Lincoln visited Hillsboro, about fifty miles south of Springfield, on September 8-10. Joseph T. Eccles was a local merchant, justice of the peace, and Republican, in whose home Lincoln stayed while in Hillsboro.

The fact that the original is at the Presidential Library in Springfield left three options for the document in Wellsville: a second copy written by Lincoln, a facsimile, or a forgery. Ms. La Voie sent a digital image of the document that immediately ruled out the first two options. First of all, a facsimile would look exactly like the original, as it would be a mechanical copy. Clearly, the line breaks were different, and the paper of the document in Wellsville was wider than it was tall, while the original was taller than it was wide. The handwriting indicated that it was not a second copy written by Lincoln but the work of a forger.

Ms. La Voie was disappointed but intrigued, so we suggested that she contact the New York Public Library, which holds a collection of more than thirty known forgeries of Lincoln documents, to see if they had suggestions regarding the identity of the forger. To our surprise, the New York Public Library had two additional forgeries of the same document, both acquired in the mid-1930s.

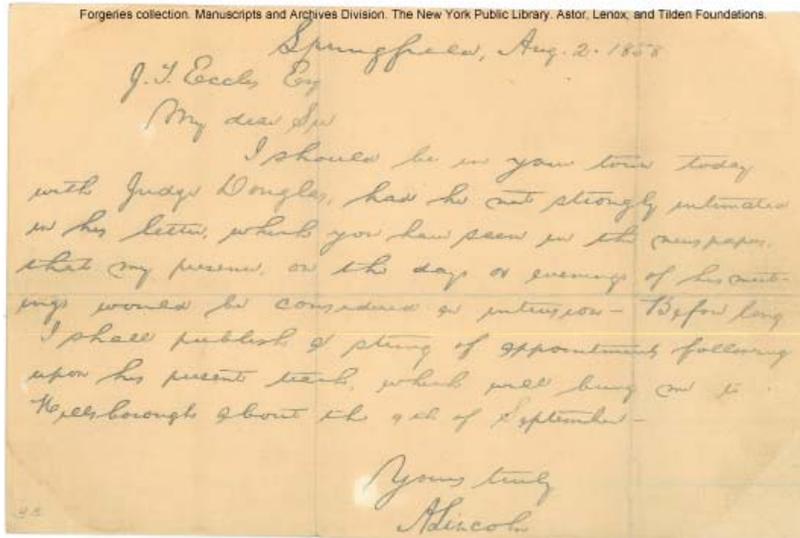
Former Associate Editor John A. Lupton believes the forger is Joseph Cosey, the alias of a notorious forger in New York City whose real name was Martin Coneely. Born in 1887 in Syracuse, New York, Coneely/Cosey left home at age 17 and became a printer's apprentice. After



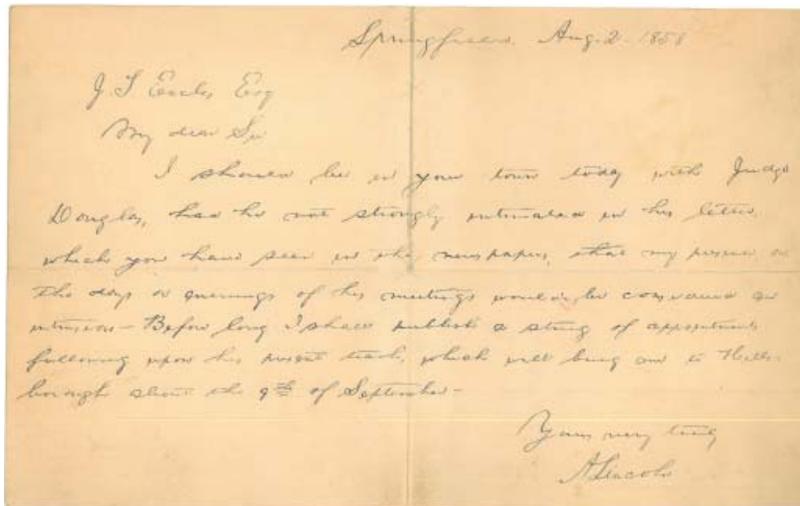
Abraham Lincoln to Joseph T. Eccles, 2 August 1858, Original.
Image courtesy of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL.

four years in the Army and a dishonorable discharge, Cosey was convicted of various nonviolent crimes and was in and out of prisons until the late 1920s. He began forging documents around 1929 and continued until perhaps 1950.

Most intriguing is the possibility that these forgeries are multiple attempts or “drafts” of a forgery, as Cosey (or another forger) sought to get closer to the look of Lincoln’s original. He must have had access to the original document or a copy of it, as it did not appear in any compilations of Lincoln documents until the publication of *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* in 1953, edited by Roy P. Basler and his colleagues. At that time, collector Foreman Lebold of Chicago owned the original, and Basler noted the existence of “a forged copy of this letter in the New York City Public Library.”



Abraham Lincoln to Joseph T. Eccles, 2 August 1858, Forgery B.
Image courtesy of The New York Public Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division.



Abraham Lincoln to Joseph T. Eccles, 2 August 1858, Forgery C.
Image courtesy of The New York Public Library, Manuscripts and Archives Division.

Forgeries of Abraham Lincoln documents exist in many private collections and small repositories. Often, the librarians, archivists, and curators of such collections have no reason to suspect that the “Lincoln document” in their collection is a forgery or a facsimile. Although it is unpleasant to have to tell custodians of such documents that their treasures are not genuine, it is an important part of trying to assemble an authoritative collection of the documents Abraham Lincoln actually wrote. Forgeries perpetrate a dual crime—they steal from unsuspecting purchasers, and they distort and pollute the historical record. It remains an ongoing

challenge for archivists, librarians, curators, documentary editors, manuscript dealers, and private collectors to identify and expose these crimes against the past.

CORRECTING A DECADES-OLD ERROR

As part of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln’s attempt to locate all documents written by or to Abraham Lincoln, we occasionally come across some documents that are important to the Lincoln narrative but do not fit neatly into established categories. For example, the November 1842 marriage license for Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd is neither written by Abraham Lincoln nor written to him. It is an authorization by County Clerk Noah W. Matheny to “any Minister of the Gospel, or other authorized Person” and Rev. Charles Dresser endorsed it, signifying that he had performed the wedding ceremony. Such “life documents,” as we have come to call them, are important primary sources, and

the Papers of Abraham Lincoln has chosen to include them without opening the floodgates to every document *about* or that *mentions* Abraham Lincoln.

Recently, we had occasion to search for all election returns that recorded Lincoln’s votes in an era of viva voce voting, both in New Salem and later in Springfield. Some of these documents were already in scope because Lincoln, as a clerk or a judge of a specific election, had written or signed the election returns. Others, however, simply recorded his vote in various elections. These election returns exist in at least three locations—the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the Illinois State Archives, and the Illinois

Regional Archives Depository at the University of Illinois Springfield.

While searching for these election returns, based on a list generated from *The Lincoln Log*, Graduate Assistant Eowyn Montgomery could not locate them for an election for constable on August 11, 1851. When she reported this missing election return, Editor Daniel W. Stowell checked the digitized files of the *Illinois Daily Journal* (Springfield) for August 1851. Curiously, there was no mention of an election for constable in August 1851—no identification of candidates, no results, nothing. A search more broadly of the digitized Springfield newspaper revealed that there had been a special election for constable on August 11, 1855, because of the death of Horace Williams. Seven candidates vied to replace him, and the *Illinois State Journal* of August 13 announced that voters had selected James W. Hampton as the new constable. Armed with the new date, Montgomery readily located the election returns for the August 11, 1855, special election for constable at the Illinois Regional Archives Depository. Surprisingly, the returns listed the voters and a tally of the votes each candidate received but did not indicate which voter voted for which candidate. We know Lincoln voted but not for whom.

Four score years ago, Benjamin P. Thomas edited *Lincoln, 1847-1853, Being the Day-by-Day Activities of Abraham Lincoln from January 1, 1847 to December 31, 1853*, published by the Abraham Lincoln Association in 1936. Thomas included the simple statement, “Lincoln votes in election for constable” on August 11, 1851, and cited “Election Returns.” Thomas’s volume was a companion to Paul M. Angle’s *Lincoln, 1854-1861*, published in 1933. Harry E. Pratt added a volume on *Lincoln, 1840-1846* in 1939, and another on *Lincoln, 1809-1839* in 1941. In 1960, the Lincoln

Partial list of voters from Springfield, IL, special election for constable on August 11, 1855. Lincoln is voter #339.

Image courtesy of Illinois Regional Archives Depository, University of Illinois Springfield.

Sesquicentennial Commission enlarged the scope of the work to cover Lincoln’s entire life and published it in three volumes as *Lincoln Day by Day: A Chronology*. Although editors revised some entries based on new information, this error persisted.

When the Papers of Abraham Lincoln migrated the contents of *Lincoln Day by Day* online in 2003 as *The Lincoln Log: A Daily Chronology of the Life of Abraham Lincoln* and began to make corrections and additions, the error remained. Now, eighty years after it was first published erroneously, the date of Lincoln’s vote in the special election for constable in Springfield can be properly attributed to Saturday, August 11, 1855.

TIES THAT BIND: THE LINCOLNS AND THE ALEXANDERS AT THE SOLDIERS’ HOME

On March 13, 1864, Mary Lincoln wrote a tearful and gracious letter to “My Dear M^{rs} Alexander,” mourning their mutual loss of young sons and her sorrow on losing the company of Mrs. Alexander and her husband, who had recently left Washington, DC, to return to their home in Kentucky. “Words, cannot express,” wrote Mrs. Lincoln, “how much, I shall miss your presence, at the Soldiers’ Home.” She and the

president “were really so sincerely attached to your noble Husband & yourself, your Kindness, to us, was so great, at all times, that we shall always feel under obligations....” The “Mrs. Alexander” in the letter was Sallie R. Alexander, the wife of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Alexander, the acting governor of the Soldiers’ Home outside Washington. While historians have detailed the Lincolns’ residence at the Soldiers’

Home, the letter, which includes Abraham Lincoln's franking signature on the envelope, reveals a close relationship between the two families, who were bound by ties of place, war, and grief.¹

The Alexanders arrived in Washington in 1858, when then Major Alexander took up the position of deputy and acting governor of the Soldiers' Home (formerly the Military Asylum) after serving in the same capacity at the Military Asylum in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, from 1854 to 1858. Before his assignment in Kentucky, Alexander, who was born in Virginia in 1807, had enjoyed a distinguished military career that included graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point, service in the Second Seminole War, and participation in the Mexican War. He also served in the Black Hawk War in Illinois, an experience he shared with President Lincoln. In 1850, Alexander, who had been widowed twice, married the widow Sallie Rudd Fetter of Louisville, Kentucky. In addition to two sons from Thomas's previous marriages, the Alexanders had eight children from 1851 to 1864, only three of whom survived to adulthood. Like the Lincolns, all the Alexanders' children were boys.²

While none of Sallie's and Thomas's children were old enough to serve in the war, Thomas's oldest son by his first marriage, Thomas Bullitt Alexander, resigned from the U.S. Army to fight for the South, and, as with Mary's Todd family, several Alexander relatives chose to serve the Confederate States rather than the Union. Like the Lincolns, the Alexanders, with their Kentucky roots and Confederate relations, became fodder for the Washington rumor mill, which branded them as secessionists in thought if not in deed. These suspicions intensified in May 1862, when the Lincolns, still grieving over their son Willie's death and hoping to find some relief from the constant heat, both physical and political, of the White House,



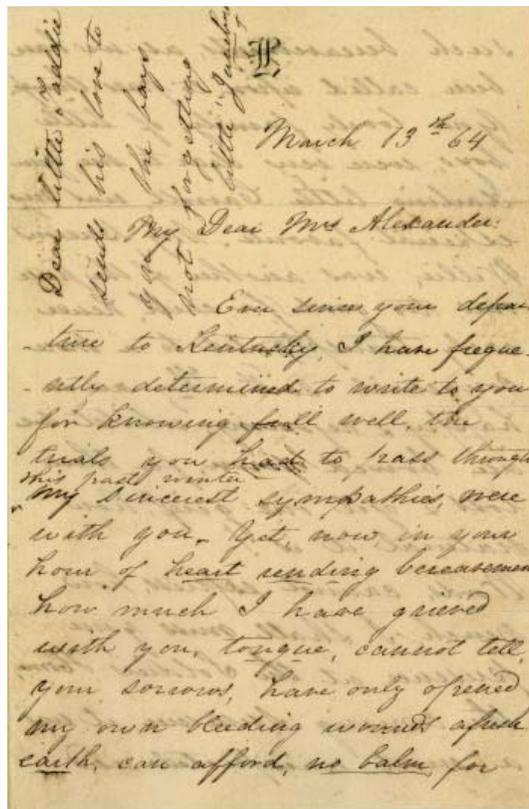
President Lincoln's Cottage at the Soldiers' Home, where the Lincolns spent their summers during the Presidency.

decided to spend the first of what would be three summers in the more restful atmosphere of the Soldiers' Home.³

Mary Lincoln's and Sallie Alexander's Kentucky roots were a powerful bond in their relationship, especially as both had family members fighting for the Confederacy. Mrs. Lincoln's concern for her Confederate relatives is well documented: eight of her fourteen

siblings supported the Confederacy, and two of her brothers died fighting in the Confederate army. Given this history and the friendship that developed between the two families, it is not surprising that the Alexanders succeeded in getting the president to arrange for the release of Colonel Alexander's nephew, Junius Brutus Alexander, a Confederate prisoner in the Union prison at Fort Delaware.⁴

Similarities in family politics was not the only tie binding the two families' relationship, however. Both families experienced the most shattering loss that parents can endure, the death of one or more of their children. Still inconsolable over the death of Willie when she first arrived to reside at the Soldiers' Home in June 1862, Mary Lincoln found an understanding ear in Sallie Alexander, who had already lost one child in 1852. Her sixth child, William Rudd Alexander, who had



Mary Lincoln to Sallie Alexander, 13 March 1864, page 1, including postscript, "Dear Little Taddie sends his love to you & the boys not forgetting little 'Junebug.'"

Image courtesy of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL.

been born in the Soldiers' Home in 1860, died on July 13, 1862, only a month after the Lincolns arrived. Less than two years later, on March 5, 1864, the Alexanders' third son, Charles Carroll Alexander, also passed away.⁵

Charles Carroll's death wounded Mary deeply. She wrote to Sallie that although all the Alexander boys "were very dear to me, your darling little Carroll, was my especial favorite." Comparing Carroll's death to that of her "precious Willie,"—the boys were close in age when they died, Willie eleven and Carroll ten—Mary proclaimed both boys to be among the "pure ones, too good for earth," and she tried to console Sallie with the thought that the boys had been "transplanted to a more congenial soil," where "They are so happy & rejoicing, whilst we are bowed down, for their loss...." Mary thanked Sallie for comforting her during her "nervous, miserable state" brought on by Willie's death, and assured Sallie that she grieved with her during Sallie's "hour of heart rending bereavement...."⁶



Envelope of Mary Lincoln to Sallie Alexander, 13 March 1864, with frank signature of Abraham Lincoln as postage.
Image courtesy of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL.

Mary's grief was compounded by the loss of her friend's presence at the Soldiers' Home. In January 1864, Colonel Alexander resigned his position as deputy and acting governor of the Soldiers' Home, when he was passed over for promotion to the official governorship of the institution. Although there is no evidence that Alexander was forced out, persistent suspicion in Washington that he was a secessionist at heart may have been the main reason for not promoting him. President Lincoln does not seem to have investigated the issue of Alexander's failed promotion and subsequent resignation, which Mary called "a most unexpected and inexplicable affair, both to M^r L. & myself." While the president did ask the army to find a suitable position in Louisville for Colonel Alexander, with the exception of Mary's letter to Mrs. Alexander, the close relationship between the two families had come to an end.⁷

By Boyd Murphree
Former Assistant Editor

Notes:

¹Mary Lincoln to Sallie R. Alexander, 13 March 1864, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM). A copy and transcription of this letter is available at *ChroniclingIllinois.org*, the digital archive of the ALPLM: <http://alplm-cdi.com/chroniclingillinois/items/show/8086>. The original Taper citation for this letter incorrectly identified "Mrs. Alexander" as Mrs. Andrew Alexander, the wife of Brigadier General (Bvt.) Andrew Alexander, a Union cavalry officer. For the Lincolns and the Soldiers' Home see Matthew Pinsker, *Lincoln's Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers' Home* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) and Elizabeth Smith Brownstein, *Lincoln's Other White House: The Untold Story of the Man and His Presidency* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2005); Paul R. Goode, *The United States Soldiers' Home: A History of Its First Hundred Years* (Richmond, VA: William Byrd Press, 1957).

²"Alexander Family," *William and Mary Quarterly* 11 (July 1902): 60-63.

³For references to Thomas Bullitt Alexander's Confederate service, see "Oliver Dekermel and Ann Bullitt, His Wife vs. Sarah R. Alexander, etc.," *The Kentucky Law Journal*, 2 (July 1882): 132-36. Other Alexander Confederates are in "Alexander Family," 65. The best account of the Todd family in the Civil War is Stephen Berry, *House of Abraham: Lincoln and the Todds, a Family Divided by War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007). Elizabeth Blair

Lee relates suspicion of the Alexanders' loyalty in her letters: *Wartime Washington: the Civil War Letters of Elizabeth Blair Lee*, ed. Virginia Jeans Laas (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 144. See Pinsker, *Lincoln's Sanctuary*, 22-23, for the Lincolns' move to the Soldiers Home in 1862.

⁴Berry, *House of Abraham*, ix-xv. For the Alexanders' efforts to gain the release of Junius Brutus Alexander and Lincoln's intervention on his behalf, see Sallie Alexander to Abraham Lincoln, 29 August 1863, Abraham Lincoln Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC; Abraham Lincoln to Edwin M. Stanton, 29 August 1863, Roy P. Basler, et al., ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 6:422; Abraham Lincoln to Officer in command at Fort Delaware, 9 September 1863, in service record of "Alexander, Junius B.," *Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers who served in Organizations from the State of Kentucky*, Record Group 109, War Department Collection of Confederate Records, Microfilm 319, National Archives, Washington, DC.

⁵Pinsker, *Lincoln's Sanctuary*, 21-22; "Alexander Family," 60-62.

⁶Mary Lincoln to Sallie R. Alexander, 13 March 1864, ALPLM.

⁷Pinsker, *Lincoln's Sanctuary*, 168-69; Mary Lincoln to Sallie R. Alexander, 13 March 1864, ALPLM; Abraham Lincoln to Henry W. Halleck, 3 March 1864, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, First Supplement 1832-1865*, 10:228.

SERENDIPITY continued from page 1

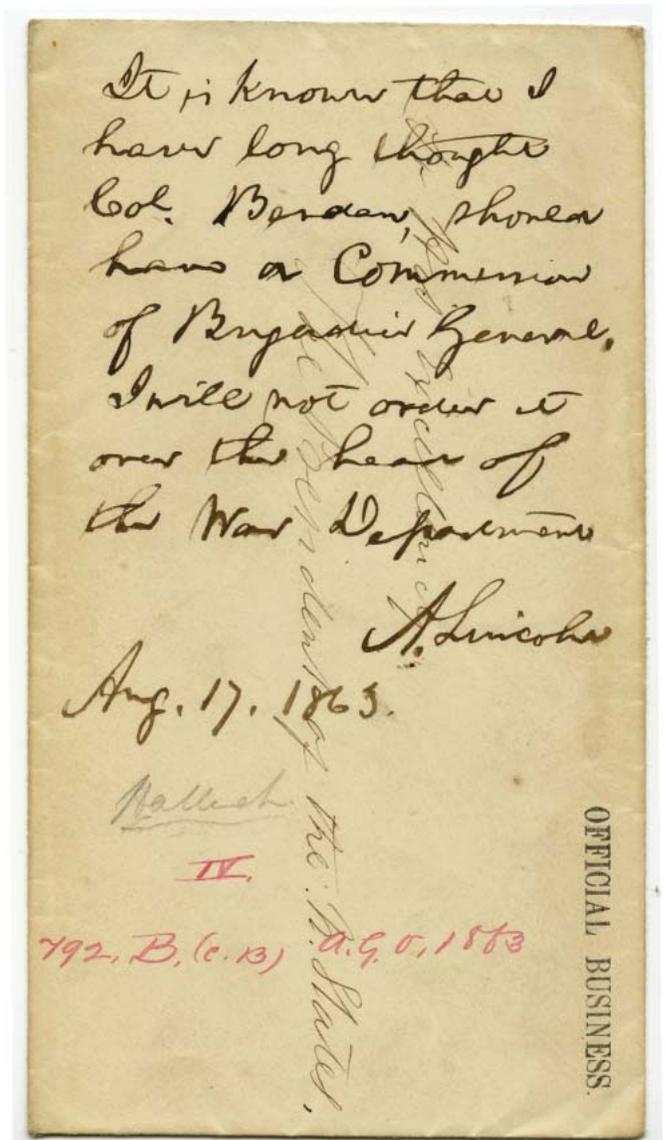
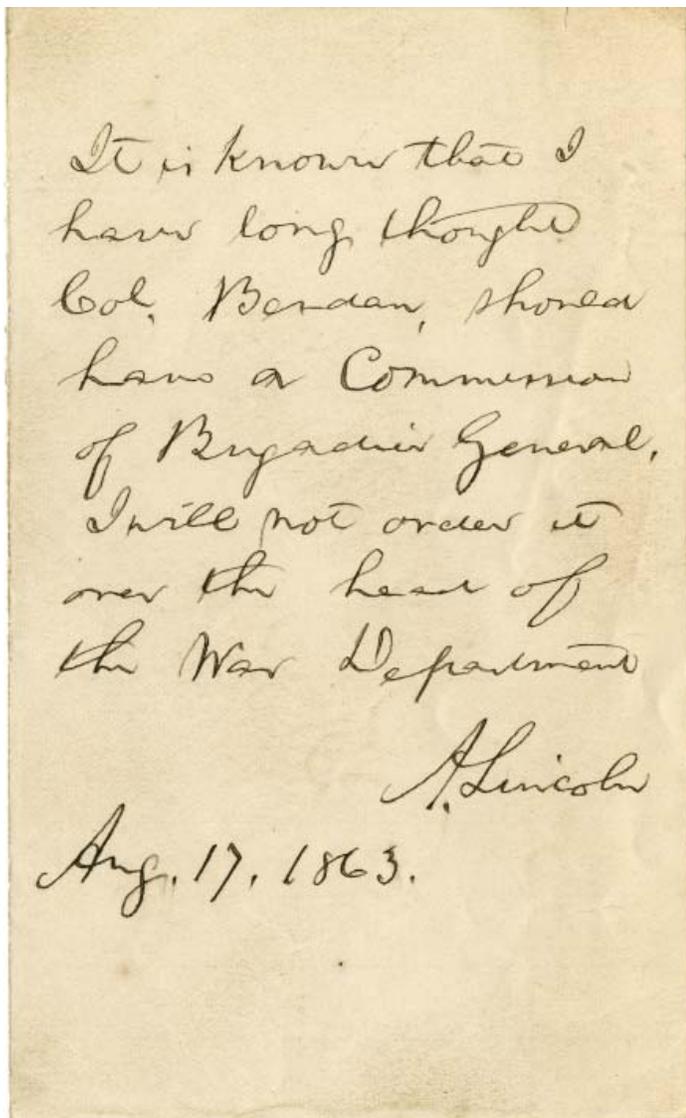
authenticity. In 2003, Jonathan Mann, publisher of *The Rail Splitter* journal, authored an article explaining why he originally believed the document was legitimate and then changed his mind and withdrew it from auction.

Although it is not unprecedented for Lincoln to write multiple copies of a single document to retain a copy, such copies rarely preserve line breaks and never replicate every pen stroke.

Comparing the images of the documents side-by-side reveals small variations and hesitations that indicate that the first document is indeed a forgery of the original at the National Archives. The skilled forger mimicked every stroke of Lincoln's pen and clearly had

access to the original document or a high-quality reproduction. However, the forger did not seek to reproduce the envelope or the address or docketing on the original.

This experience reminds us that forgeries are a real problem for document collectors, manuscript dealers, archival collections, and documentary editing projects, and that good ones are very hard to identify. Detecting and excluding forgeries is a significant challenge for the Papers of Abraham Lincoln, and we are pleased that a simple request for an image led us to discover and remove one hiding in our own database.



Forgery (left) and Original (right) of Endorsement of Abraham Lincoln to Unknown, 17 August 1863.

Sources: Images courtesy of Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL (left) and Record Group 94: General Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Series 297: Appointment, Commission and Personal Branch, 1783-1917, Letters Received, 1863-1894, Box 1180, National Archives Building, Washington, DC. (right).

LINCOLN EDITOR

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln

ISSN 1537-226X

(3-16)

A Project of



Cosponsored by Center for State Policy and Leadership
at University of Illinois Springfield
Abraham Lincoln Association
(a Founding Sponsor of the Lincoln Legal Papers)

Project Staff:

Daniel W. Stowell, Director/Editor; Stacy Pratt McDermott, Assistant Director/
Associate Editor; Ed Bradley, Assistant Editor; Kelley B. Clausung, Assistant Editor;
David Gerleman, Assistant Editor; Christian L. McWhirter, Assistant Editor; R.
Boyd Murphree, Assistant Editor; Daniel E. Worthington, Assistant Editor; Eowyn
Montgomery, Graduate Assistant; Gayle Gatons, Office Manager.

Please address inquiries and gifts to:

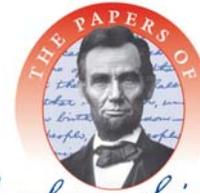
The Papers of Abraham Lincoln
112 North Sixth Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1512
Phone: (217) 785-9130 Fax: (217) 524-6973
Website: <http://www.papersofabrahamlincoln.org>

Follow us on



How You Can Help:

- **Find Lincoln:** By advising project staff of known or reported Lincoln documents in your locality. We are seeking copies of any document, letter, or contemporary printed account that relates to Abraham Lincoln's entire life, 1809-1865.
- **Fund Lincoln:** By making a tax-deductible donation to the Papers of Abraham Lincoln in support of the project. Such gifts provide crucial support in furtherance of the project's objectives.



Abraham Lincoln

This project has been supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, an independent federal agency, and the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.